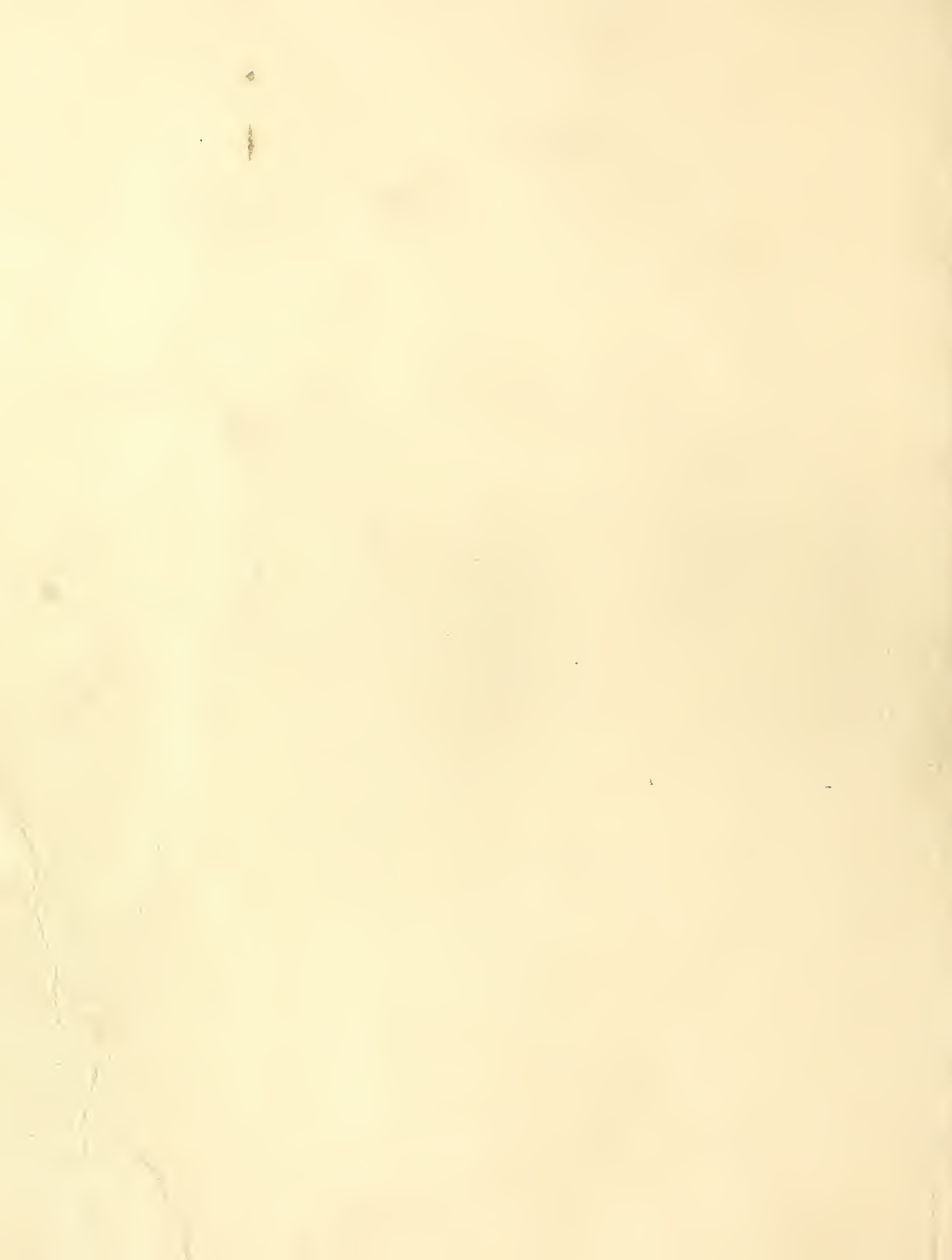


Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



Housekeepers' Chats

Monday, May 21, or
later

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: Timely items of interest to the housewife. Program includes recipes and menu from Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

Bulletins available: Sun Suits for Children, Fitting Dresses and Blouses, Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes.

--ooOoo--

At last, they are up. I mean my curtains. I thought it would be such a simple task, to make curtains for the living room. So one evening, after dinner, I got out my cretonne, a sunfast, washable material, green, with big posies in vivid red, yellow, and orange, with black leaves.

I measured the windows. I measured the cretonne. And what do you think? Something was wrong with the windows. They were just a little bit too long for the cretonne. Still, I was determined to make the curtains before I went to bed. I searched through my piece-bag till I found a remnant of yellow linen, which I had bought for a summer dress. It was just the color of the yellow flowers in the cretonne. I made deep facings of yellow linen on the bottom of each side curtain, and on the valances, which come between. Then, instead of hanging the curtains on rods, in the good old-fashioned manner, I made a series of tiny pleats, in the curtains, sewed hooks on the wrong side and hooked the curtains over the rods. The hooks do not show, and the pleats give the curtains a perky look, which I like very much. After the curtains were up, I experimented with tie-backs, and found that narrow tie-backs of the yellow linen were what I needed. I won't use glass curtains for summer, since the view outside my window is an attractive one. My shades are buff. Small green and red parrots, made of wood, swing on the ends of the shade cords.

As I said before, my curtains are up, and my living room looks quite cheery, but I must confess my curtains did not go up in one evening. Did you ever make curtains for three windows, and hang them, all in one evening? If you did, you have my most profound respect and admiration. If your husband put up the curtain rods, and hung the curtains, without getting tangled up in them, and falling off the radiator, and dropping the hammer on his toes, and scolding the children because they were "only watching" him--then my admiration for him amounts to hero worship.

But I have spent enough time on curtains--let's plunge right into the question box.

First: "Do you have any patterns for making the children's sun suits, which you mentioned the other day?"

No, there are no patterns for making these sun suits. However, I am quite sure that if you send for the leaflet, which has pictures of the sun suits, you can tell how they are made. Almost any well-fitting romper pattern can be used in cutting sun suits. Through the sleeveless, open-mesh waists of these suits, the ultra-violet rays of the sun can penetrate, and change chemical substances in the body to Vitamin D. This so-called Vitamin D in turn enables the child to use the calcium and phosphorus from his food more efficiently, and grow better bones, and teeth. If the child has a tendency toward rickets, the ultra-violet rays will help prevent, or cure. However, the sun suits described in this leaflet are not for sick children, but to help keep well children well. The leaflet is free. It is called "Sun Suits for Children." It is already one of the most popular publications I have mentioned.

Next question: "Is there any reliable rule for sewing in sleeves, so that the right sleeve will always be in the right armhole, and the left sleeve in the left armhole?"

Yes, there is such a rule. If you want information about setting sleeves in summer dresses, please send for Miss Campbell's free bulletin, called "Fitting Dresses and Blouses."

Next: "How can I keep my aluminum pans bright?"

Answer: Aluminum is easy to keep in good condition, but one precaution should be observed in cleaning it. Alkalis discolor aluminum; therefore, it should not be washed with strong soap, nor with scouring powders containing free alkali. Discoloration may be rubbed off with whiting, or with fine steel wool.

Next question: "Please tell me how to remove stains, made by water containing too much iron, from a porcelain bathtub."

Answer: These stains may be removed with oxalic acid solution. Remember that oxalic acid is a poison, and be sure to wash it all off.

This question reminds me of something I read the other day, about Queen Elizabeth. It seems that a gossip sheet was circulated in the days of Good Queen Bess, and this is the alarming comment it carried: "The Queen hath built herself a bath, where she doth bathe herself once a month, whether she require it or no."

Poor Queen Elizabeth! But then, there was no running water in her day, there were no bathtubs, such as we have now; and soap was an expensive luxury. I have heard that the ladies of the court used a great deal of perfume.

But what has all this to do with the price of cheese? Nothing, you answer. Speaking of cheese reminds me of something else I meant to tell you.

The next time you serve a plain lettuce salad, with plain French dressing, sprinkle over it grated cheese. As I said the other day, many things can be done with plain French dressing, to give it piquancy. Various chopped vegetables, as onions, parsley, beets, celery, red or green peppers, and olives, may be added in small amounts to the original mixture. Tomato ketchup, chili sauce, horseradish, mustard, or other condiments, will give plain French dressing a new and pleasing flavor.

One more question, before we talk about dinner, and a very good dinner, it is, too.

"I wish you would please tell me," writes a housewife, "whether the kind of skillets and pans used in cooking meats and vegetables, has any marked effect on health. I have recently bought a set of cooking utensils, of a certain popular make, supposedly valuable from a health standpoint. Can you tell me something about this subject?"

Answer: This letter is similar to hundreds of others which are being received by the Bureau of Home Economics, from housewives all over the country, who are inquiring anxiously about the effect of certain kinds of utensils on the healthfulness of foods. Here is the answer:

"Our recent bulletins emphasize a well balanced diet made up of five groups of foods. Some of these should be served raw, and some cooked in a variety of ways. So long as this is done, the kind of cooking utensil used, provided it is in good condition and properly used, is not going to have any marked effect on health.

"As scientific research goes on it will, of course, be possible to make more and more definite statements about the influence of various types of cooking utensils on food values. At present, however, comparatively little research has been done on this question, and there is no foundation for many of the claims made by salesmen of certain utensils, either for their own products or against those manufactured by rival concerns. In short, you need have no fear about injury to health from the use of cooking utensils ordinarily found in the American kitchen today, provided you eat a well balanced diet."

Now let's see what's on the menu: Broiled Fish; Savory Cooked Lettuce; Mashed Potatoes; Radishes; and Pineapple Pudding.

If you are going to broil your fish, under a gas flame, place the fish, skin side down, on a greased pan, or baking sheet. If you are going to broil it over hot coals, place it in a greased broiler. Fish should always be broiled at medium temperature, for a comparatively short time, so it won't be tough, and dry. When it's properly done, broiling develops a particularly delicious flavor, in fish. In using a gas flame, turn it fairly low, and place the fish far enough from the flame so it will cook rather slowly. Just before it is done, place the fish closer to the flame, so it will turn a golden brown. Slip the broiled fish

R-H.C. 5/21

gently onto a hot platter, add a little melted butter, and serve with it some slices, or sections, of lemon.

Next, Savory Cooked Lettuce. This recipe was tested only this week, by the Recipe Lady, so it's as up to date as you could wish. Five ingredients, for Savory Cooked Lettuce.

- 1 cup diced salt pork,
- 3 quarts cut lettuce
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- Salt, and
- Onion juice, if desired

The five ingredients again, for Savory Cooked Lettuce: (Repeat)

Wash the lettuce thoroughly. Cut it in pieces about 3 inches long. Cook the salt pork, in a heavy skillet, until brown and very crisp. Then remove it from the fat. Add the lettuce to the hot fat, and stir until it wilts. Add the vinegar, and cooked salt pork, and more salt if needed. The time of cooking will vary with the lettuce, but do not cook any longer than necessary to wilt the lettuce. Add small quantity of onion juice, with the vinegar, if desired.

Next, Mashed Potatoes. If I told you how to cook mashed potatoes, I know you'd laugh at me, so I won't risk it. But you won't laugh at this Pineapple Pudding. Not if you take meal planning seriously, and try to find something new, in the way of a good wholesome dessert, once in a while. Everybody ready, to write the recipe for Pineapple Pudding. Eight ingredients, for Pineapple Pudding:

- 1 cup water
- 1 cup pineapple juice
- 1 cup crushed pineapple
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs and
- Juice of 1/2 lemon

Check the eight ingredients, please, while I repeat them: (Repeat)

Mix the cornstarch, salt, and sugar thoroughly. Add the cold water. Cook for 10 minutes, in the upper part of the double boiler. Remove from the heat. Add the beaten egg yolks, the pineapple, and lemon juice. Fold in the well-beaten egg whites. Place in a greased baking dish. Bake in a moderate oven, for 35 minutes. Chill before serving.

To repeat the menu: Broiled Fish; Savory Cooked Lettuce; Mashed Potatoes; Radishes; and Pineapple Pudding.

Next time I'll tell you how to make jelly.

